

Managing Generations And Relocations

The modern workplace is becoming increasingly complex and a one-size-fits-all approach is no longer suitable when determining your employees drivers and motivations for success. Put simply, understanding your workforce is no longer as straight forward as it was in the past, and most organisations will recognise that employees are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of culture, gender, skills and age.

Age is one of the biggest defining factors in the modern workforce, and can form vast differences in motivations, needs, behaviours and expectations. Generations are marked by the cultural, political, economic and social norms of their youth, so it makes sense that each generation is influenced differently – particularly when it comes to relocation and international assignments.

Both Generation X and Y typically seek a more flexible way of working and an opportunity to see and explore the wider world. They want to focus on what they can achieve at work and the value that they can add, rather than the amount of hours they spend there. Moreover, this age bracket is comfortable with remote working and the use of technology for communication, aspects that can be defining factors of success when relocating abroad.

Millennials too, generally in their 20s and early 30s, are typically more open to the idea of relocation, something which can even be an expectation for some, as they want to explore places, cultures and seek a career that can give them a similar experience to exploration or travelling. This generation often has more international travel experience and a greater comfort with technology, and do not necessarily aspire to “move up” in their organisation; they value experience more. These traits can positively affect the mobility of Millennials, who tend to manage their careers pro-actively and therefore have expectations about assignments that their predecessors may not have had, in the sense that they expect their work to be both personally and professionally rewarding.

Because they are more connected to the world through technology and have more travel experience or awareness than past generations, during relocation

this new generation does not require the same kind of support as older assignees. Supporting Millennials means making the value proposition of assignments very clear to them, adapting policy and programme support to integrate with their needs. This generational demographic varies across industries and cultures – ranging from the adventurer assignees that raise their hands, to the elite and highly educated assignees with greater expectations.

Newer generations prefer online contact to personal when moving and expect information quickly and concisely, where they can readily process material and create swift plans. Providing online resources and help to these generations is essential, and something which a third party relocation company can assist with, taking the strain off the younger generations who have an expectation of ready made materials and information.

With relocation such a huge motivation for this generation, HR plays an important role in attracting a high caliber workforce and maintaining motivation within it. Creating a culture of openness and trust can ensure that employees can be clear about their aspirations and ensure that the business can support them where possible, helping create and maintain a happy workforce. Moreover, introducing an international assignment project can help employees to understand the future possibilities for their career and actively demonstrate that the business understands the different needs and motivations of employees. Even offering the possibility of a short assignment, which really stretches a high potential graduate, may be an ideal motivator at that stage of an individual's career.

Organisations that can recognise the increasing complexity of the generational gap and reflect it in their culture and business infrastructure, are likely to be rewarded by increased engagement and productivity. Offering a competitive rewards package and flexibility at certain life stages will attract the calibre of staff needed to undertake expat assignments, as individuals are likely to become more mobile if they see a move as conducive to career development and it occurs at an appropriate life stage. Approaches to global mobility are at their most effective

when they are underpinned by effective policy frameworks and authorisation routes that are adhered to.



Peter Sewell is a Regional Director at Crown World Mobility. Peter has a strong track record in developing global mobility policies, processes and strategies. Peter is responsible for overseeing client programmes and service delivery, implementing group policies, working closely with expatriate tax and other suppliers. He's also in charge of reviewing existing local practices and leading project reviews with customers.
Email: psewell@crownew.com
For further information about Crown World Mobility's services, please visit www.crownworldmobility.com

NOTE FOR YOUR DIARY

*The 2015 Corporate
Relocation Conference &
Exhibition will take place on
Monday 2nd February 2015*

**For further information on
attending or exhibiting,
please email:
helen@internationalhradviser.com
or telephone Helen Elliott
+44 (0)208 661 0186**